

So as a painted Tyrant *Pyrrhus* stood,
And like a Newtrall to his will and matter, did nothing.
But as we often see, against some Rorme,
A silence in the Heavens, the Racke stand still,
The bold windes speechlesse, and the Orbe below
As hush as death: Anon the dreadfull Thunder
Doth rend the Region. So after *Pyrrhus* pause,
A to wised Vengeance sets him new a worke,
And neuer did the Cyclops hammers fall
On Mars his Armour, forg'd for prooffe Eterne,
With lesse remorse then *Pyrrhus* bleeding sword
Now falls on *Priam*.

Out, out, thou Strumpet-Fortune, all you Gods,
In generall Synod take away her power:
Breake all the Spokes and Fallies from her wheele,
And boule the round Naue downe the hill of Heauen,
As low as to the Fiends.

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall co'th Barbars, with your beard. Pry-
thee say on: He's for a Iigge, or a tale of Baudry, or hee
sleepes. Say on; come to *Hecuba*.

1. Play. But who, O who, had seen the inobled Queen.

Ham. The inobled Queene?

Pol. That's good: Inobled Queene is good.

1. Play. Run bare-foot vp and downe,
Threatning the flame
With Bison Rheume: A clout about that head,
Where late the Diadem stood, and for a Robe
About her lanke and all ore-teamed Loines,
A blanket in th'Alarum of feare caught vp.
Who this had scene, with tongue in Venome steep'd,
Gainst Fortunes State, would Treason haue pronounc'd?
But if the Gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw *Pyrrhus* make malicious sport
In mincing with his Sword her Husbands limbes,
The instant Burst of Clamour that she made
(Valeife things mortall moue them not at all)
Would haue made milche the Burning eyes of Heauen,
And passion in the Gods.

Pol. Looke where he ha's not turn'd his colour, and
ha's teares in's eyes. Pray you no more.

Ham. 'Tis well, Ile haue thee speake out the rest,
soone. Good my Lord, will you see the Players wel be-
row'd. Doye heare, let them be well vs'd: for they are
the Abstracts and breefe Chronicles of the time. After
your death, you were better haue a bad Epitaph, then
their ill report while you liued.

Pol. My Lord, I will vse them according to their de-
sart.

Ham. Gods bodykins man, better. Vse euerie man
after his desert, and who should scape whipping: vse
them after your own Honor and Dignity. The lesse they
deserue, the more merit is in your bountie. Take them
in.

Pol. Come fits.

Ham. Follow him Friends: we'll heare a play to mor-
row. Dost thou heare me old Friend, can you play the
murder of *Gonzago*?

Play. I my Lord.

Ham. Wee'l ha't to morrow night. You could for a
need study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which
I would set downe, and insert in't? Could ye not?

Play. I my Lord.

Ham. Very well. Follow that Lord, and looke you
mock him not. My good Friends, Ile leave you til night
you are welcome to *Elsonover*?

Rosin. Good my Lord.

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. I so, God buy ye: Now I am alone.
Oh what a Rogue and Pefant flauie am I?
Is it not monstrous that this Player heere,
But in a Fixion, in a dreame of Passion,
Could force his soule so to his whole conceit,
That from her working, all his visage warm'd;
Teares in his eyes, distraction in's Aspet,
A broken voyce, and his whole Function suiting
With Formes, to his Conceit? And all for nothing?
For *Hecuba*?

What's *Hecuba* to him, or he to *Hecuba*,
That he should weepe for her? What would he doe,
Had he the Motiue and the Cue for passion
That I haue? He would drowne the Stage with teares,
And cleave the generall eare with horrid speech:
Make mad the guilty, and apale the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed,
The very faculty of Eyes and Eares. Yet I,

A dull and muddy-metled Rascall, peeke
Like Iohn a-dreames, vnpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing: No, not for a King,
Vpon whose property, and most deere life,

A damndefeate was made. Am I a Coward?
Who calles me Villaine? breakes my pate a-crosse?
Pluckes off my Beard, and blowes it in my face?
Tweakes me by th'Nose? giues me the Lye i'th Throate,
As deepe as to the Lungs? Who does me this?
Ha? Why I should take it: for it cannot be,
But I am Pigeon-Liuer'd, and lacke Gall
To make Oppression bitter, or ere this,

I should haue fatted all the Region Kites
With this Slaues Offall, bloody: a Bawdy villaine,
Remorselesse, Treacherous, Letcherous, kindles villaine!
Oh Vengeance!
Who? What an Ass am I? I sure, this is most braue,
That I, the Sonne of the Deere murdered,
Prompted to my Reuenge by Heauen, and Hell,
Mult (like a Whore) vnpacke my heart with words,
And fall a Cursing like a very Drab,
A Scullion? Eye vpon't: Foh. About my Braine.
I haue heard, that guilty Creatures sitting at a Play,
Haue by the very cunning of the Scene,
Bene strooke so to the soule, that presently
They haue proclaim'd their Malefactions.
For Murder, though it haue no tongue, will speake
With most myraculous Organ. Ile haue these Players,
Play something like the murder of my Father,
Before mine Vnkle. Ile obserue his lookes,
Ile tent him to the quicke: If he but blench
I know my course. The Spirit that I haue scene
May be the Diuell, and the Diuel hath power
T'assume a pleasing shape, yea and perhaps
Out of my Weaknesse, and my Melancholly,
As he is very potent with such Spirits,
Abuses me to damne me. Ile haue grounds
More Relatiue then this: The Play's the thing,
Wherein Ile catch the Conscience of the King.

*Enter King, Queene, Polonius, Ophelia, Ro-
suerance, Guildenstern, and Lords.*

King. And can you by no drift of circumstance
Get from him why he puts on this Confusion:
Grating so harshly all his dayes of quiet

With

With turbulent and dangerous Lunacy.

Rosin. He does confesse he feelles himselfe distracted,
But from what cause he will by no meanes speake.

Guil. Nor do we finde him forward to be founded,
But with a crafty Madnesse keepes aloofe:
When we would bring him on to some Confession
Of his true state.

Qu. Did he receiue you well?

Rosin. Most like a Gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Rosin. Niggard of question, but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

Qu. Did you assay him to any pastime?

Rosin. Madam, it so fell out, that certaine Players
We ore-wrought on the way: of these we told him,
And there did seeme in him a kinde of ioy
To heare of it: They are about the Court,
And (as I thinke) they haue already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:

And he beseech'd me to intreate your Maiesties
To heare, and see the matter.

King. With all my heart, and it doth much content me
To heare him inclin'd. Good Gentlemen,
Giue him a further edge, and driue his purpose on
To these delights.

Rosin. We shall my Lord.

Exeunt.

King. Sweet *Gerrude* leaue vs too,
For we haue closely sent for *Hamlet* hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may there
Affront *Ophelia*. Her Father, and my selfe (lawful espials)
Will so bestow our selues, that seeing vnseene
We may of their encounter frankly iudge,
And gather by him, as he is behaued,
If be th'affliction of his loue, or no.
That thus he suffers for

Qu. I shall obey you,

And for your part *Ophelia*, I do wish
That your good Beauties be the happy cause
Of *Hamlets* wildenesse: so shall I hope your Vertues
Will bring him to his wonted way againe,
To both your Honors.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

Pol. *Ophelia*, walke you heere. Gracious so please ye
We will bestow our selues: Reade on this booke,
That shew of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft too blame in this,
'Tis too much prou'd, that with Deuotions visage,
And pious Action, we do surge o're
The diuell himselfe.

King. Oh 'tis true:

How smart a lash that speech doth giue my Conscience?
The Harlots Checke beautied with plaist'ring Art
Is not more vgly to the thing that helps it,
Then is my deede, to my most painted word.
Oh heauie burthen!

Pol. I heare him conning, let's withdraw my Lord.

Exeunt.

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the Question:
Whether 'tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
The Slings and Arrowes of outrageous Fortune,
Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them: to dye, to sleepe,
No more; and by a sleepe, to say we end
The Heart-ake, and the thousand Naturall shooakes

That Flesh is heyre too? 'Tis a consummation

Deuoutly to be wish'd. To dye to sleepe,

To sleepe, perchance to Dreame; I, there's the rub,
For in that sleepe of death, what dreames may come,
When we haue shuffel'd off this mortall coile,
Must giue vs pawse. There's the respect
That makes Calamity of so long life:

For who would beare the Whips and Scornes of time,
The Oppressors wrong, the poore mans Contumely,
The pangs of dispriz'd Loue, the Lawes delay,
The insolence of Office, and the Spurnes
That patient merit of the vnworthy takes,

When he himselfe might his *Quintus* make
With a bare Bodkin? Who would these Fardies beare
To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The vndiscover'd Countrie, from whose Borne
No Traueller returnes, Puzzels the will,
And makes vs rather beare those illes we haue,
Then flye to others that we know not of.

Thus Conscience does make Cowards of vs all,
And thus the Nature hew of Resolution
Is sicklied o're, with the pale cast of Thought,
And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
With this regard their Currants turne away,
And loose the name of Action. Soft you now,
The faire *Ophelia*? Nimph, in thy Orizons
Be all my finnes remembered.

Oph. Good my Lord,

How does your Honor for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thanke you: well, well, well.

Oph. My Lord, I haue Remembrances of yours,
That I haue longed long to re-delier.

I pray you now, receiue them.

Ham. No, no, I neuer gave you ought.

Oph. My honor'd Lord, I know right well you did,
And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd,
As made the things more rich, then perfume lett:
Take these againe, for to the Noble minde
Rich gifts wax poore, when giuers proue vnkinde.
There my Lord.

Ham. Ha, ha: Are you honest?

Oph. My Lord.

Ham. Are you faire?

Oph. What meanes your Lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and faire, your Honesty
Should admit no discourse to your Beautie.

Oph. Could Beautie my Lord, haue better Commerce
then your Honesty?

Ham. I trulie: for the power of Beautie, will sooner
transforme Honesty from what it is, to a Bawd, then the
force of Honesty can translat Beautie into his likeness.
This was sometime a Paradox, but now the time giues it
prooffe: I did loue you once.

Oph. Indeed my Lord, you made me beleeue so.

Ham. You should not haue beleeued me. For verue
cannot so innoculate our old Stocke, but we shall relish
of it. I loued you not.

Oph. I was the more deceiued.

Ham. Get thee to a Nunnerie. Why would'st thou
be a breeder of Sinners? I am my selfe indifferent honest,
but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were bet-
ter my Mother had not borne me. I am very prou'd, re-
uengefull, Ambitious, with more offences at my becke,
then I haue thoughts to put them in imagination, to giue
them shape, or time to acte them in. What should such
Fel-